

Hero

by The Lilty Warrior

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Summary: A young girl's day turns into a nightmare as the Covenant attacks her Colony home. Master Chief saves her life. Read and Review! EDIT added new scene that I forgot to put in. Enjoy!

Hero

****Disclaimer: ****_Halo_ and all it's characters and universe were created by _Bungie Studios/Microsoft _

****Authors Note: ****Other usernames I use on other sites include ****Sparrow**** (Adult Fanfiction dot net), ****Djehuti**** (Mediaminer) and ****The Lilty Warrior ****(Fanfiction dot net) My artwork is on deviant art at [www dot djehuti dot deviantart dot com](http://www.dot.djehuti.dot.deviantart.dot.com)

This story was inspired by an awesome fan art on Deviant Art dot com called _"Master Chief: Hero Final"_ by the artist 'Pinkuh'. Look her up - her Halo works are amazing!

The time frame that I'm working in for this fanfic is BEFORE the fall of the UNSC Military Colony of Reach. It's just one of the many battles with the Covenant as the alien forces pick off various human colonies on the Outer Rim. For the record, the girl in this story is probably around 7-8 years old.

****Dedicated to: ****My best friend and class mate Tim - for it's his fault I'm obsessed with Master Chief and this great Sci-Fi Fandom _("Go Master Chiefâ€¦GO GO GO!")_

*****Hero" ****- a _Halo_ Fanfiction

Written by: The Lilty Warrior

The small girl huddled behind what was left of her home as flashes of plasma fire shot over her head. She could feel the ground shake from bomb detonations and hear the loud chatter of automatic weapons fire.

She didn't know how long she had been hiding but it felt like an eternity.

The girl's day had started off normal enough as she had been playing at a nearby park. Then suddenly things changed into the stuff of nightmares as the Covenant attacked the peaceful Human Colony and reduced the main population centre to fire and debris.

The girl had been knocked off her feet as a result of a house exploding across the street from the park, and her cries were drowned out by the roar and tinkling of broken glass. She had scrambled to her feet soon after, bolting like a frightened deer as she headed for the first place she could think of that would be safe. Her home.

This illusion of safety however was shattered when she arrived at the smoking ruin of what used to be an apartment building. "Mama!" She cried helplessly as she wandered the wreckage that had been her home for as long as she could remember. Where was her Mama? She was always there to comfort and to hold in times of fear. If she found Mama then everything would be okay. So there the girl huddled, hoping that her Mama would find her.

Just another victim of the bloody Covenant War.

The girl didn't know much about the war between the Covenant and Humanity but she did know that the topic was one of great unease among the adults and that it was rarely mentioned in her presence. The girl choked back a fearful sob as more explosions shook the ground and at the screech of strange looking airplanes streaking overhead.

Flashes of light shot past her and a vehicle that was parked down the street suddenly detonated in a loud roar of fire and heat. The girl squealed and half turned with a stumble as she attempted to run down the remains of the sidewalk. Odd looking glowing darts of light flashed past even closer and she felt a hot searing pain in her leg as one of them nicked her calf only to keep going and explode a nearby fence. Wooden splinters flew everywhere and the force of the blast caused the girl to fall to the ground.

Miraculously she still lived - though she was stunned from both pain and the explosion. As if from far away she heard odd noises that sounded like yelping barks and they were getting closer. She whimpered in pain and fear - wanting to wake up from this bad dream.

Suddenly the dazed girl was swept up and turned away from enemy fire in one smooth movement as her rescuer pivoted on one knee and returned the favor with a weapon of his own. The girl wailed at the loud sound of the gun in her ears - aware of the bright flashes at the muzzle of the weapon even though her eyes were squeezed shut.

The flashes of plasma fire ceased momentarily and she was only dimly aware of the soft metallic tinkle of shell casings as the large figure scooped her up and dashed into the alley between the remains of her building and the one next to it. They didn't stop there however, and the girl felt a sense of speed and a moment of slight vertigo as the figure leaped impossibly high over a crumbling wall

and landed at a dead run. Wind whipped her hair about as she clung on for dear life.

They slowed after a few minutes and darted into the burnt out shell of another building. The girl felt herself being placed carefully onto the ground. She opened her eyes to thank whomever had whisked her to safety and immediately shrank away with a frightened squeak at the sight of the armored figure looming over her. He was very tall and he was wearing a helmet with a reflective visor which hid his face from view. She had never seen someone so large before. She had thought her Father was tall but this figure would tower over him for sure.

Her eyes were wide and tear filled as she watched the imposing figure look over his weapon, the large hands working deftly as he removed the clip and slammed a new one in with a sharp _ka-chak_! His movements had the familiarity and swiftness of one with lots of experience with the action.

"Are you an alien?" The girl whimpered with a forlorn snuffle.

The armor-clad being looked down at her and she could see her tear-stained face reflecting back at her on the shiny visor.

"No," came the clipped response. "I'm a Spartan." The deep male voice had a gruffness in its tone with the slight tinny sound of coming out of hidden speakers somewhere on his helmet. The girl relaxed only slightly - he did say he wasn't an alien - but she didn't know what a Spartan was either.

Clipping his weapon to his waist, the armored man shifted closer to the girl with the intent of checking her injuries. He was a soldier raised and trained for war, not one who would know how to look after children. What he did know was how to field dress wounds in the hectic environment of a war zone.

Shaking with worn off adrenaline, the girl watched as the Spartan examined the bloodied wound on her leg with surprising gentleness.

"What's your name?"

The question caught the girl off guard and she watched as he took out a small kit and proceeded to spray her wound with stuff that helped relieve the pain and stop the bleeding. He had spoken merely to keep the girl distracted and as relaxed as possible while he worked.

"Katie." She said with a slight quiver to her voice. "I was looking for my Mama at home. I can't find her." A tear ran down her face as he finished bandaging her leg and proceeded to clean a gash on her cheek. "I'm scared. I want Mama!"

There was a pause and suddenly a _female_ voice came out of the man's helmet!

"Katie, don't be afraid. My name is Cortana. I'm an AI - do you know what that is?"

Katie stared in startled confusion, not expecting the other voice.

She remembered her Father talking about AI's once and tried to think of how he explained what one was. "A person that lives in a computer?"

"You could say that. I'm a program inside this man's armor. Listen Katie, I need you to trust me and Master Chief okay? We'll get you out of here and somewhere safe."

The girl nodded meekly as Master Chief finished dressing her injuries and put the medkit away. "We can't stay here. We'll be too much of a target." He said suddenly, peering out of what used to be a window but was now a ragged hole. This situation was a 'snag' which kept him from working on his mission objective but it wasn't a major digression. He had all ready reported the civilian girl's presence - and had been given the co-ordinates to the nearest Evac point.

"Chief! Enemy contacts coming from our ten about 50 meters off and closing rapidly." Cortana said suddenly, speaking internally in the Spartan's helmet to keep Katie from hearing her report of imminent danger. The Spartan could see the red blips on his HUD and he tensed. If he ran out with Katie now - she would surely be harmed from enemy fire. He needed to get out of the area fast and unseen, and this moment was not the time. Even if he managed to get out - the Covenant would surely call for reinforcements and attempt to box them in.

Well that was unacceptable. Master Chief would just have to make sure that those Covenant soldiers weren't going to be around to make any calls for reinforcements.

An explosion rocked the ground beneath them as a plasma grenade detonated close by. With a cry of alarm, Katie flung herself at the Spartan despite her injured leg and grasped tightly, unable to reach completely around the width of the man's armored waist.

"Katie. I need you to be still and very quiet." Master Chief said with quiet urgency trying to soften his tone a little as he gently removed the scared child and guided her to huddle close to the ground. "Stay low..." He directed softly, reaching for something at his waist. The strange barks and growls became more audible as the enemy approached closer a few buildings away. He didn't think that the aliens knew of their presence, which made this a little easier to do. He had to destroy the small group of Grunts and Jackles quickly and at once - and he had just the thing to do the job.

Katie did as she was told, huddling into a little ball and staring with wide glassy eyes as she watched Master Chief hold an egg shaped object in his gloved palm. She held her breath as she saw him kneel absolutely still, watching and waiting at the ragged hole in the wall. The sound of the alien's grew closer until it sounded like they were right next to their hiding place. Dust from shattered plaster tickled the girl's nose and she desperately prayed that she wouldn't sneeze and make a noise. Before her worries could become reality however, she watched in wide-eyed amazement as the Chief pulled the pin on the frag grenade and lobbed it through the hole in the wall with a powerful arc of his arm. All this was done in a blur of smooth movement that was almost too fast for her eyes to follow. A split second later, the Spartan had knelt, huddled over her as a makeshift shield.

_WHAM! _

The frag grenade exploded and obliterated the aliens that were caught in it's blast radius - blown apart with shrapnel. The debris hadn't completely settled when the Chief straightened quickly and scanned the area outside through the opening in the wall, gun in hand.

"Contacts destroyed," Cortana reported. "We better get a move on Chief before more show up..."

The Spartan couldn't agree more as he gathered Katie in his arms quickly. Adjusting her so that the frightened girl was cradled in one arm to keep his firing hand free, the Chief charged out of their hiding place at Cortana's direction to keep from being spotted by any more Covenant forces.

He wasn't one to run away from a battle, and his soldier instincts screamed at him to engage the enemy, but he had to get the girl out of danger first. A pair of Covenant Banshee aircraft swooped overhead - their engines roaring their unearthly howl. Katie cowered in his arms, burying her face against his armored chest as he ran and leapt to duck under the overhang of a roof that had partially collapsed.

The ground shuddered violently again as a blast from the Banshee's plasma weapon exploded a collapsing structure two buildings away, then a second salvo slammed into the building next to them. Debris and shrapnel flew every which way like tiny missiles. Master Chief twisted and huddled over, shielding the girl with his body as his MJOLNIR suit's shield flickered gold briefly and protected him from damage. Katie's ears rang from the noise and she felt a large hand curl around the back of her head to protect her from flying glass.

The Chief waited until the aircraft passed over them again and he heard them move off to look for other targets. Only then, did he move from their hiding place and dart off in the direction of the Nav marker blinking on his HUD indicating the Evac point. Cortana called out directional co-ordinates for him to follow to keep him as far as possible from Covenant attack groups.

The other Spartans in his group were aware of the situation, for he had filled both the blue team and the red team in while he was on the run. His blue team were busy engaging the enemy and keeping the brunt of the alien forces distracted, while the red team was helping with evacuating survivors and defending the Pelican Drop ships that would fly everyone out. Mixed in the melee assisting the Spartans were the UNSC Marines to keep the Covenant busy.

Katie's hearing was starting to return when she felt Master Chief slow down and duck against the side of a building before moving into a doorway. In the city square two blocks beyond was a couple of large oddly shaped ships. Marine soldiers ran about the area, helping people inside the aircrafts, assisting with injuries, or guarding the area from attack.

Suddenly another person in armor like the Chief's appeared next to them. "Area secured." A female voice stated from the newcomer's

helmet. Katie saw the Chief nod and was aware that they were communicating, but she couldn't hear them.

Finally, the Spartan put her down and she stood wobbly on her feet. "This is Kelly. She'll take you the rest of the way to safety." He stated as he motioned towards the other Spartan. For this mission she was red team leader and was in charge of Evac.

Katie looked up at Kelly in wonder, though a little nervously at the prospect of separating from the Chief. The female Spartan was very tall though not as tall as the one who saved her. Like the Chief, she wore the intimidating armor and her face was hidden behind a reflective visor.

"It will be okay." The woman said in calm crisp tones. "We are almost at the landing zone now." She reached out a hand to the small girl, but Katie had stepped back when she saw Master Chief turn to head out of the doorway. His intent was to rejoin the blue team to assist with keeping the Covenant forces at bay so that the red team could do their job.

The Spartan stopped from stepping through the door and looked down as he felt a small hand tug at his gloved fingers. Katie was looking up at him with questioning eyes and he signaled for Kelly to keep watch at the doorway while he hunkered down to be closer to the girl's eye level.

"I have to go. My team mates need me to help them fight." He stated calmly with only a hint of urgency. "You will be safe with Kelly."

Katie nodded. "I knowâ€¦" She sighed sadly. "Do you think the other Spartans found my Mama and Papa?"

"If anyone can find them, they can." Came the simple reply. The Spartan started to stand up but the girl reached up towards his head with insistent fingers. The Chief heard Cortana chuckle with amusement on his internal speakers.

"Looks like she wants to see you Chief before you run - I'm monitoring the area and the team freq. It looks like the Covenant ground forces are being held for the time being."

With a motion of his shoulders that could have been a sigh, Master Chief reached up and took off his helmet for the girl but only for a minute for he didn't want to delay.

Katie found the energy to smile a little as she looked up at the Chief's serious dark eyes. His hair was brown and cropped short and his skin was pale white. It looked like he didn't smile a lot either. He probably fought aliens way too much, Katie deduced as she reached up to trace the fine line of a scar on the Spartan's cheek. His dark eyes followed her movements as he watched in silence and Katie withdrew her hand, satisfied that he was indeed a human being under all that armor.

"Master Chief? That's not your real name is it?" Katie frowned, finding the idea of that being an actual name quite odd.

The Spartan shook his head. "No. My name is John."

Katie brightened, suddenly stretching up to wrap her arms around the soldier's neck to give him a tight hug. "Thanks for saving me John," She said thankful, meek and polite. "Thank you Cortana!" She directed this in the general direction of the Chief's helmet which was being grasped loosely in one armored hand. She wasn't sure if the AI could hear her or not, but she said it anyway.

It took the Chief a couple moments to figure out how to react. Such gestures of affection were never expressed among the Spartans during their harsh life-long military training and so the motion caught him off guard. He reached up and patted her hair lightly in an awkward manner before prying her off as gently as possible. Katie looked up at him and she saw the serious look on the Spartan's face change slightly as John's mouth upturned into a very brief smile - but only for a moment. Then he nodded.

"Goodbye Katie." He said in his soft gruff voice as he stood, putting his helmet back on. He held out his hand and she took it for a quick handshake - her small hand lost in his much larger grasp. She watched him leave and run back the way they had come and allowed the Spartan, Kelly to pick her up in her arms for the last quick sprint to the Evac point.

As Kelly gave Katie to a friendly Marine that led her towards one of the Pelican ships, her Father had ran to them from a cluster of evacuees. Her Mother was to be found later - after they had all escaped the doomed planet with the rest of the surviving colonists.

From that day forward - Katie's life had changed. But even though she never saw John again, she never forgot the 'guardian angel' that had swooped down and saved her life, nor the other Spartans who had fought for her and the colonists.

THE END!

End
file.